

***Please share this information with your school councils!



KDE-mail

SBDM Council News

September 19, 2005

Welcome!

Division Director's Notes

This is a critical week in the future of each Kentucky student. Teachers and leaders in each school are reviewing test scores, and learning whether or not students in their schools received the needed support and instruction to achieve at high levels. Soon, school councils will meet in each school to review the school's disaggregated data, and look again at the school's needs, gap targets, and goals for improvement. The information that schools are reviewing now should guide the efforts of the adults in the school in the coming year.

As schools begin to review and revise their plans, many will use an Implementation and Impact Check process similar to the sample available on the KDE Planning web page. If your schools do not have a process, we encourage you to look at these documents, and have a discussion with your superintendent about any process or format required by the district to conduct a regular check on school plans.

We believe that a special meeting of the school council for the purpose of reviewing disaggregated data and allowing time to ask and answer all questions about the student's scores should occur in each school within the next few weeks. The principal, perhaps an expert to assist if needed, and the council members should work together to look at how students are performing and determine if they need to change the direction of their school.

As SBDM Coordinator, you play an important role in facilitating this important council work. How do you support your councils as they meet to look at their test scores? We encourage you to network with your colleagues to find ways to continue to support schools as they engage in this task. It is one of the best opportunities in the school year that you will have to provide assistance, answer their questions, and help with planning.



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Please see our planning resources at [KDE Planning Tools for Schools & Districts](#)



Need to Close Achievement Gaps? Try This! (From "What Works in Schools: Translating Research Into Action" by Robert J. Marzano)

Here are some facts that Marzano presents in the book:

The Effect of Individual Teachers (p. 71-74):

- ▶ The most important factor affecting student achievement is the TEACHER.
- ▶ More can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor
- ▶ 13% of the variance in student achievement in a given subject area is due to teacher behavior.
- ▶ 7% is due to the total school response (including council policy, planning, etc...).

Characteristics of an Effective Teacher (p. 75):

- ▶ If teachers exhibit average performance and a school is willing to do all that it can to be most effective, then students in that school will demonstrate remarkable gains.
- ▶ If a school is willing to do all that it can at the school level and if all teachers in the school are at least competent in their profession, the school can have tremendous impact on student achievement.

What can school councils learn from this work?

According to Marzano, the most important thing that school councils can do to close gaps and increase student achievement is to make decisions and provide resources across the school that will improve the effectiveness of all of the teachers. To accomplish this, teachers must be engaged in the work of the school, and must be part of decisions that are made that effect them. They must be able to access help and resources through a system at the school that gives support where it is needed. The council can write policies and approve a school improvement plan that focuses on improving the effectiveness of teachers across the school. The following are some of the teacher behaviors (you can find more in the book) identified through Marzano's research that effective teachers exhibit and that councils can support:

Instructional Strategies (varied and effective practices are used)

Classroom management (shows consideration, patience and respect)

Teacher-student interactions (uses different strategies with



different students)

Curriculum (knows what is important to teach, teaches that, and ensures a variety of ways to learn)

Equity (ensures distribution of time and resources to all students in the classroom and expects all students to learn)

Classroom Assessment (frequent, aligned with what is important, high quality requested and received)

Hot Topic—Wellness Policy

Q: In middle schools housing grades 5-8 must we institute a wellness policy?

A: Since the school includes students within the K-5 range (i.e., 5th grade students) the school council must have a physical activity policy. However, the school is required to apply the policy only to 5th grade students. The school may choose to apply the policy to all of its students.

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Gene Wilhoit wrote an article for the September 2005 edition of *Kentucky Teacher*. We will be including excerpts of that article as a series in our next SBDM district coordinator newsletters. Please share this information with your school councils and school staffs.

Rigor

Kentucky educators must be very deliberate about what they are teaching students — intervening with students who are not ready and pushing those students who are ready to move on to the next level. We must provide individualized instruction.

Do all children in your school have access to a rigorous curriculum?

- If not, what are you doing about it?
- How are you making the necessary changes to provide more rigor?

Do you have intervention strategies in place for those children who are not quite ready for a rigorous curriculum? Are you pushing those students ready to move on to other levels?

- Are the interventions research based? Do they show promise

The article can be viewed in its entirety at [Kentucky Teacher](#)



of success?

- Are teachers trained to use the interventions, and are they intervening for those children who need additional help?
- Is your school moving from putting all students in the same curriculum during the same time with the same expectations or is the faculty beginning to think about what it will take to move every student to a higher level? This means a shift from thinking about the time a student spends in the classroom to assisting each student in reaching a performance goal.

Are you depending on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) to make instructional decisions about students? CATS is the test used in Kentucky to

measure school accountability. The best assessments and policies for making decisions about students are set at the school level.

- Do teachers have appropriate classroom assessments that really tell where students are before teachers begin instruction?
- Are those assessments aligned to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment and the Program of Studies?
- Do you assess students on a regular basis? Do you record the results? Do you base instruction on what students show they know on these assessments?
- Do you use classroom assessments to help individualize instruction according to the needs of each student?

Council Membership & Training Verification

The deadline for posting 2005-2006 council member information to your district website is November 1.

If you have questions or need assistance with council membership and training verification, please contact Erin McGee at Erin.McGee@education.ky.gov or 502-564-4201.

Quotation of the Month

Education would be so much more effective if its purpose were to ensure that by the time they leave school every boy and girl should know how much they don't know, and be imbued with a lifelong desire to know it.

Sir William Haley

The template for posting council information is available for download in Word and HTML at [SBDM Membership Data Submission](#)



